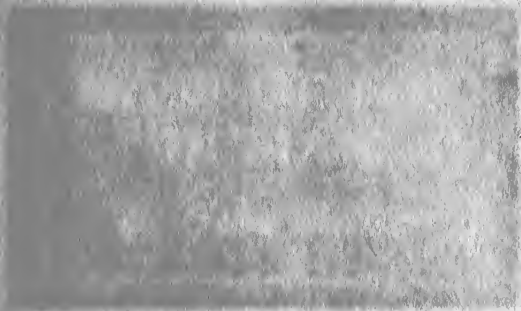


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HARP OF THE
HUMAN

By John Collier



HARP OF THE HUMAN



BY JOHN COLLIER
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1913

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“A FLOWER IS STRONGER THAN THE WINDS THAT
WORK THEIR WILL
OR THE YEARS THAT WING THEIR WAY THROUGH
DARKNESS TOWARD THEIR AIM.”

To D. W.

(Died, 1906)

OLD VALLEYTOWN: 1913

The mountains brood around.

*There is no hollow or scarp of those vast and lonely ranges,
that is not older than the human race.*

*You, who in life were visibly one with timeless energy,
who were the triumphal will of Life, are gone. Your
memory is a flower of loveliness, revealed in lightning or
seen as bowed and lashed by thunder-rain, when at sun-
set the last rays fall on the lilies of that garden where
you are remembered.*

*Your moment, though gone already into silence and shadow,
is not at war with these long ages which wrought in
fire these hills, and carved them with the water of a
million years. Though all the oceans of the world have
poured through Junaluska a thousand thousand times,
your passage is not as a leaf that floats and is gone.
There is no separation between your frailty and this
power of giant time, nor between your defeat and the
victory or defeat of that labor wherein is eternity un-
folded. Nor does your incandescence of personal soul
fall chill or waver, now while on these mountains rains
the invisible light from suns grown dark long ago, in
universes beyond the Milky Way.*

*Your last word with a friend was an impassioned nega-
tion of the possibility of eternity for the human soul.
Yet in your eyes then and there, amid seeming wreck
and gloom, the light of an achieved immortality flamed;
in your wonderful heart the secular illusion was already
a mist made translucent by the sun; in your voice was
the supernal cry of that cosmic miracle.*

*The Thought, that mysteriously does the will of Eternity
in ways of Time; the Yearning, deflected out of all skies,*

backward toward the human race; the Reality, indwelling in thirst and power and form, the irreducible reality of experience: these are founded in deeps where your will labors yet. With the dead, they say, movement and change have an end; and sweet is the thought of overwearied dust grown still, of silence grown as an unapproachable fountain, near at hand and waiting for all. But sweeter it is, and more true by all tests than any truth beside, that the reachable world is like a Leyden jar, where luminous power unseen, with rhythm fleetier than thought yet stately as the movement of worlds, has its ebb and flow perpetually, out of the dark, glorified, all-conserving abyss. In that abyss, O Friend, it is not that your personal soul is conserved. It conserves, our personal soul, yours and ours; and on our way it lies to prove and to know, that souls are indeed *The Conserving Abyss*.

Tonight only the stars illumine the far-pointed hemlocks, the dwelling so pure and fair and glad which seems an Athenian tomb. The far immeasurable starlight limns the mountains. You are here, but not only here. And this hand that writes is yours, but not yours alone. The mystery of interpenetrating lives and times and worlds, of the divine infinite paradox, of mutual love that outlives the grave—it is your flower, this mystery, seen in lightning, in sundown and by the stars, in a garden which you remember.



HARP OF THE HUMAN

O HARP of Unnumber'd Strings, Harp of the
Human!

All, all our music is less than thine undertone.
Yearning thou art with but symbol in star or woman,
Pathos in eyes that weep never, being alone.

Thou art hung within vagueness and dream, within lone
desire

In an ancient land, O Harp of Forgotten Strings:
Deep in unmemoried halls, a remembering Lyre;
Faint, in Arcadian estrays, a Reed that sings.

Far in the laboring breast, far on the verges

Of the inward world, from our passionate quest apart,
Unknown of our hands whom the earth-war marshalls
and urges—

Does thy vigil grow weary, O Harp of the Exiled
Heart?

Harp of the Human! not ever thus hast thou waited,

Not always hung dumb while no hand of the mortal
strove

On thy mystic strings with compassion and love o'er-
freighted.

There are far-off years where they tell how a con-
quering Love,

No glow on the night, no voice past a phantom portal,

But a very Hand from beyond the veil and the deep,
Was laid on thy hungering chords, O Harp of the Mortal,
And its promise imbues thee still in our dreams of
sleep.

Harp of the Gloaming! toward thee the symbols cluster
And thy moan is heard amongst legends and dreams
of old,
Till we know not if only in timeless and pensive lustre
Of the Academe, of Nazareth, thine hidden wonder
is told—

If the Rose of the World, Lily of the Infinite Grail,
Galahads and Deirdres, stars of the ideal sea,
And the child at play in our door-yard's wistful pale,
The enshrin'd, the unconscious, alone have knowl-
edge of thee!

Harp of the Human! Long has the chord of an hour,
Play'd by strong hands lit with the light of day,
Sung through a world of deed and command and power;
But ah, thy more shadowy strings, how they yearn
to play!

Oh Harp! On war-ways we march to the strident
thunder
Of impelling tones pour'd from thy boundary-chord,
And over our host enough of thine heavenward wonder
Is echoing, that God and the Ages have still their
word,

But Yonder . . . on fallow fields are the mists o'er-
shrouded,
And the well-springs go dark and unloved from
source to sea,
And the gleaming shrines of the mountain are dumb
and shrouded,
And our souls are like ghosts, for loss of the throb
from thee!

FROM THE STARS

*The low light on the horizon wakes,
And where that boreal light is led
In more than dream the impulse wakes
To call to us the mystic dead.
Then the ethereal, cosmic spark,
Earth-charged, illumes that nameless Pole,
That Garden of the freezing dark
Where blooms the star-fruit of our soul.*

EARTH-SOUL, the keys are strange. The notes
Of thy dark mind seem blurred with pain.
Even as the sunbeam drives the motes
In vain against the wind, I am vain.
My soul is filled with thine eddying breeze,
With thy noise of the earth-sea; I am laid with its
rhume.
The subtler will is estrayed in thy maze.
I grope like a soul in the darkling womb,
. . . . On thine wavering dream-water a wraith I raise—
It is ether-borne from the Martian tomb.

. . . . Yonder, afar, on an olden shore,
Our period is done.

 We strive no more
Even with the cosmic powers, the laws
Which wrought us of old.

 They bid us pause
Now, and unstring the æonian lyre
Wherethrough our vesper was pour'd like fire:
Though every battle of ancient dawn,
Lost even as all was lost, is won
In us, and every rose of pride
And every maiden hope that died
Lives like a crystal fill'd with flame

In star-dawn of yon far sphere's dream ;
And we, whose dawn-flush'd brows are fann'd
With airs from an impossible strand,
Go on o'er homing tides, through spray,
Wave-jubilant, of a starry way.

Earth-soul, believe! Our globe of dew,
Rounded, gave back the heavenly light
Of whorl on whorl our fathers knew,
Who understood the scope of night.
Cycles beneath their footsteps lay ;
Age-filter'd knowledge, plunging dream
For aeons fulfilled the Martian day
Which fades, a taper in infinite gleam,
Which fades, in sunrise on granary floors
Where the awful winnowing of cosmic law
Breathes its blast on the dying Martian shores.
We are seed for that Sower . . .
We are steeds for that Plow.

. . . . Revelation?

To thee it were *wings of lead*
Or a bridge of mist over unplumb'd seas,
Or such face as, in midnight unstarr'd and dead,
Thy wandering dream-hour beholds and flees ;
Or as vain as dawn-dew, elusive, seen
In deserts by caravans athirst, astray ;
Incredible as violets where ne'er hath been
Dew, air or the burgeoning flush of day.

Only a vague, an assuring moral breath
Can I bring, or any who speak through dream or death.
Nothing that I may know is known as thou
Yearnest for knowing ; and knowing, thou would'st not
know.
Thy years do bring such proof as thy brain doth crave

Of personal destiny to o'erlive the grave,
But the Promise breath'd in the human heart of old
Is as flying fire on thy verge till earth grow cold.

Still

Thou prayest of me
What thou cravest of all
Who are gone on that Sea
Which thy creed maketh small,
Which thy brain giveth form
From thy pools left apart,
Though they know not the storm
Nor the hope of its heart,
Though they know not the home-ways
Nor the ships of that flood
Nor the drift of its foam-ways
Nor the thought of its God.

Earth-soul, *not* to breathe
What thine own kindred gone
Strive so vainly to wreath
Through thy last dreams at dawn—
Inconceivable plummet,
Thought-shattering fires
From the gulfs and the summits
Of thine enfranchised sires
Whom the Symbol hath drunken,
Whom the True hath re-found .
When thy Real hath shrunken
And thy silence grown Sound:

Though these mysteries press o'er thee
Of thy journeying soul
And the darkness before thee,
I but speak of the Whole;

For with this thou art bound,
And the way of thy Race,
When all years are unwound,
Thou shalt know face to face,
On a positive Morrow,
Impossible, uncreate,
And more vast than thy crime or
thy grace.

. . . . Yet out of the deep of stars and the inner deep
Has the Soul, full many a time of yesterday,
Drawn thee-ward adown the zones of mist and sleep
And breath'd vague parables of thy planet's way.
Never, nor forever in all the days that lie
In the unimagi'd future, could sage or god
Reveal that Aïden whose blooms will pierce the sky
When unto the end thou bear'st thy racial load.
Even as the lone way of thy spirit's flight
Exceeds all revelation and waits in veil
On thy soul's desire when crack these walls of night,
So is thy racial road and its Holy Grail.
Fled is my vision and vain: I may but speak,
Even of thy human race, words dark to thee.
Thy race is as a seed in March winds bleak.
How should it know that far millennial tree,
Cedar of Lebanon, deep wild-apple bower
Or vine of the trumpet or wheaten harvest dim?
I can but say with passionate word,—the flower
Is in thy seed, thine aching clod, thy rime!

. . . . Haply even God knows not, or wills
To know not, that which none save He,
The o'erbrooding Deep where all tide stills,
Can guess or dream, which waits in thee.
Not that words fail or symbols break

Only, or that thou fail'st of might
To peer where the milleniums slake
Their thirst in founts of love and light,

But more,—that the undetermin'd goal,
The unshap'd fane, the plan undream'd
By any uncorporeate soul,
In thee abides, by thee is deem'd,
Hath clue or light or life to thee
Alone; in all the heaven of stars
Flames for thine only heart to see;
In the atom-storms or galactic wars

Is thy flying ensign, wrought of thy soul,
Flung on the immense, yet none may scan
That banner, or seek that mystic goal,
Save thee, blind, piteous, transcendent Man!
Out of the sunset God's breath is blown;
On Calvary the promise is seal'd in blood;
But thou hear'st but a seaward cry, and none
May precede on thy self-engender'd flood.

. . . . Fading, drawn downward through infinite wreath
on wreath

Of mist, of memory not mine, and mystic blend
Of soul with soul in labyrinths of dream and death,
I am call'd to the secular labor that hath no end;
And all that I take is a yearning of friend for friend,
And all that I tell is the watchword thine own heart saith,
And all I would leave by the watchfire thine heart
doth tend

Is a lifeward urging, a more desiring faith;
And to those who are wandering, one word out of
heaven I send:

I, one Dominion of the multitude
Who toil or who pause in Holy Rood
And who see the Milky Way as a star
In the vaster heaven of the Infinite Home,
And the soul of Man more resplendent far
Than all the heaven where his race doth roam :

O Man, though I cannot teach, I know
You shall shape your lesson as you go.

O Man, there is none who *would* flash light
From onward worlds into your night
Wherethrough, by your own law, you climb
On steps of night toward your Sublime.

Temper'd your soul ; yet where you move,
On roads your human feet shall wend,
Are subtle fires you dream not of
Whose tempering purpose hath no end.

Living, ineffable it gleams,
Your hope no victory can fulfill.
Memory is not a wraith of dreams ;
It is potent, central, indomitable :

Though far on tides no bark may sail
For long milleniums, it may heave
Its bird-wing or cloud-mountain pale,
Through it the ultimate world doth live.

O Man, on a height more far, more strange
Than the face of the moon's dead mountain-range,
And ineffable as silvern or ruddy shore
Of the dawn-star, thy cosmic fruit hath store,
Yet it lies where thy looms make thunder, where crowd
Thy social hosts in dissolving cloud.
The Keeper of the Hoard—the God, the Whole,

Thou art glory in His eyes: thou art His goal,
Yet he sundereth ne'er one skein of all
The web that enwinds thee, King and Thrall!

To thee is thy way of virtue known,
A fourth dimension, thine own alone.
The terror, the brand, the weight, the flail
Of consequence is thy billowing sail.

Though thou abhorr'st thine enemy,
Blind soul, I can see truth in thee.
Though infinite duties on thee press
I do acclaim thy selfishness;
And though, inveterately blind,
Thou hatest truth, thou art a wind
That fans it into life, to be
Light on new shores that wait for thee.
Thou art defeated, victor thou:
Thou buildest where thou breakest down,
Thou nerverest whom thou strikes low,
Thou can'st not flee thy mission.
Yea, though thou bear'st them down, the young,
The hopeful, and the hungering,
They welcome thee who mak'st them strong,
And thou art good in everything:

And even as thou to life art good,
Or now, or in the years to be,
So all the anguish of thy blood
Mysteriously is good to thee.

Life's joy thou drinkest: know, O Soul,
That all thy laughter, smiles of rest
And passionate renderings, do control
The arrow of life through boundless quest.

Darkness

Not mine, even thine the scroll.

Distance

The deeper Sound is nigh,

I am gone as where flaming waters roll

Voice of thy dreams am I.

I am in thee and of thee

Lo, thine the scroll

Yet I live and shall not die,

Where in Mystery,

In the blue on mountain-ranges of the waiting soul,

In the immanent wilderness, yielding yet virgin forever,

We are comrades of wandering. What uncreate Pole

Hath God's own unaccountable wandering, is whisper'd never

Save, alone—that the love all-human, and ineffable

Mystery of will, of memory, no death can sever.

Farewell!

THE CONQUERER

LOVE, on a crag of time, with beating breast,
With quivering wings, there glowing mystically
In sudden light that lighten'd all the sea
When life swung heavenward from ancestral rest—
There in the hallow'd moment that is press'd
'Gainst the dark heart while earth hath memory,
Pois'd love. Ah Love, those lovers! Surely we,
That far-off morning, guardian'd well that nest!

Love is gone now, down the undying west
O'er solemn verge what vast wings lift and wane,
There on the journeying deep's o'er-freighted crest,
Through forests of the wandering wonder-rain,
In rainbows on an ocean lov'd and blest?
Plum'd as the sun—Love, Love—the Bird again!

NIOBE

(A BRONZE HEAD BY PICASSO: CALLED "A BUST")

O BROTHERS and sisters, come ye and gaze
with me.

She is dark and relentless and strange, and
our Mother she.

Dark and supreme and dim as a simoon-shade,
She the Rememberer, the Keeper, the Womb which
made!

Ah, the ages of groaning of immemorial slaves
And the wasted Christs and the lands of remembering
 graves,

And the Brunos, and the myriads who go a famish'd way
Since her first Immortal was born to our planet's day!

She is the Artist, robed in a thunder-tide,
Who stands by our gates of modernity sunder'd wide
And forgets not the sterner glories the ages owe
And forgets not the bale nor the anguish of long ago.

She of the seed-time, under Attila's storm!
She of the earth-thrust, formative through ruin'd form!
She of despair, whose remorseless and onward gaze
Hath impelled Despair as a hewer of untrod ways!

Shall our ocean-daybreak to vaporous glamor pass
While this Mother remembers the dole and the dream
 that was

And the deeps of repayment our beauty, our life must hold
And the art-hope not of perfume nor ease nor gold?

Oh, She of bitterness, remembering the fiery flail
And the battle-mound and dungeon and torture-bale:
No rose-way nor wine nor stringed music Her awful art,
But the wheel of Ixion and the torn Promethian heart.

Lo, brothers! In bronzèd symbol the Mother-Soul!
Her bond is a blood-bond, her indefinable dole
Is the garnered pain of the baffled splendor of a world,
A resolute Purpose more awful than lightning hurled,

Her chaos a dancing star, but her mournful dream
Is as poignancy of a rainbow in moon-gleam,
And her debt of forbidden fulfillment shall be paid
Ere our earth be our home, ere our Human its goal
hath made!

A CHILD IN THE MORNING

YOU are lit with a magic flame,
A lightning in space and night,
Yet you know not the font whence
came

That splendor of life and light,

Where, brooding and gloaming, lay
That soul of the aether-zone,
The light of your melody,
The spell of your undertone.

Child, and soul of my soul
And comrade of morning ways,
Here is a miracle
And key of eternities :

That all your wave and its foam,
Ineffable under the stars
And wild with night under gloom
And radiant with sunrise bars,

Your wave and its wonder-heart,
Its passion that breaks the shore,
Is an immemorial part
Of the ocean forevermore :

For the sky sends down its breath
And the wave leaps, lifted and blown,
But the ocean is underneath—
Its life is the ocean's own.

Ancient, older than day
Is the glory laid over you.
Young as your heart at play,
Young as a globe of dew,

Young as the sunrise-flame
On mountains of cloud or snow,
Old as from whence it came—
Oh Spirit, how should you know?

CHRIST IN DREAM

AH, CHRIST! Who to my sleep last night came
nigh,
Risen from some earlier dream o'er-worn
and gone,
Like a breath exstatic from maiden raiments blown,
Spray of spring rains on gray eternity
Of inland hill-rocks, or land-bird's homing cry:
Passionate, far, unmitigable, unknown,
Thou Christ, Whose worlds, Whose ages are Thine
own,
God of the ice and flame whose breath am I:

Lo, Thou, arcturian Flower that wilt not die
From this lone shore, lo, earnest Wizardry
Of music poignant, awful, from the deep
Of all wild waters: lo, where my bent oars ply
In glamor and anguish and battle, still Thy sigh
Is round me like some romance dreamed in sleep!

ON READING JAMES MARTINEAU

IN THIS our deep of life uncompasséd,
Heav'd by star-sway or drawn by magnet-pole,
By trade-winds in a world-wide motion led,
The waves of ages and creations roll.
Deeds brave and far, waves of the ancient soul,
Mark the long ocean-track remembered,
Dim battle-ways where earnest worlds have bled,
Dominion of wan goal on hopeless goal.

And all around, the ocean-paths are full
With mournful men who deem one wave the sea.
The illimitable movement purposeful
Which knows no fixity nor futility,
Whose infinite goal is here and beautiful,
In whose deep Deed alone life's hope may be,
Breathes wave on wave, resplendent, bountiful . . .
That men may deem one wave Finality!

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

THE dew, the star: these things can be
Which in the long-enduring year
Of childlike life's white prophecy
Have reft our prudence and our fear.
The sunken stream is living here
Fed by far hills unagingly,
Forgotten, myriad, faithful, near.
Heed we the child, that these things be!

These things can be: these magic rays
Of old-world dream-resplendencies
Whose glamor of forgotten days
Hath gone with Ys below the seas.
Renew'd are Merlin's alchemies,
And Camelot's lambent orioles blaze
When childhood opes, with golden keys,
Our prison to the magic rays.

Lo, they can be: the wildwood eyes
Of lynx and wolf and lion and bear
That watch the fire while it dies
And Man Primordial is there
Who thrills with passionate pulse the fair
Frail breast, and lights the infant skies
With hope and terror, everywhere
That memory lives in childhood eyes.

Yes, they can be: these lordlier powers
Of ultimate fealty, borne like shields
Above this human race of ours
On all its myriad battle-fields.
In vain for aye, Philistia wields
Its mace, its measure, while like flowers

The innumerable childhood yields,
In hosts renew'd, these lordlier powers.

Ah, they can be: those shining tides
Where none but sacred bark may go,
Seen in a vision that abides
Forever while earth's waters flow,
Forever while earth's lilies blow
And while that mystic hour betides
Dream in its gift of youth may know,
Now as of old, those star-drawn tides!

And they shall be! Youth of the World,
Not evermore is laid the spell
Whereunder is our banner furl'd
And dry our ancient saintly well
And dumb our ancient folk-mote bell.
Evilly o'er our sleep is curl'd
New smoke of wizardry chill and fell,
But thou art Wizard of the World.

O mighty Wizard, Wonder-child,
Thou hast thine old tempestuousness!
O Eater of the honey wild
And locust in the wilderness,
Thyself the Life which comes to bless:
Restore thy sword, thine undefil'd
Life-passion, to us in world-distress,
O faithful Child, O Wonder-child!

THE BEATITUDE

FAR on the gloaming wold its wonder is known.
Beauty, breaking the heart of the toilers here,
And broken hope, and surcease from the lesser
fear—

It is token of these, their light is that wanderer's own.

Ah, but cloud in the tremulous human sky,
Cloud, in the infinite river bath'd with fire,
Victorious over the gloaming, mystic Desire—
Some mightier mercy hath bound thee infinitely,

Yea, even thee, to the service of the dark plain.
From sunfire, from moon-way, down through tor-
rential storm
Thou art call'd as we where the deep Intentions
swarm,
And thy glory is below in a world of transfigur'd pain.

Far on the plains the departing thunder is loud . . .
It is laden with dews to be shed on marches far;
It is earth's own bloom, though fring'd with a silver star
Where it moves in splendor, a fountain of fire and cloud!

TO ISADORA DUNCAN

(IN SORROW—APRIL, 1913)

SUCH joy as winds would bring from past the grave
None living, O Isadora, has brought as thou.
Thou hast saved us, but thine own thou could'st
not save.

Haply no soul is broken as thou art now.

Thou, like Ayesha, out of holier morn,
Bathed in a pillar of flame no tongue hath told
And over stairs by ageless dream unworn,
Hast brought us life from very Fonts of Old,

And all thy fountain turns to agony now.
Because through beateous will and love on wings
Thou hast led us where eternal amaranths grow,
Thou liest most crushed of trampled piteous things.

For this of all things else thy mission seemed
When the breath of Grecian vistas breathed from thee—
That life shall live even as life's heart hath dreamed,
That even through love alone shall life be free,

And through deep passion shall beauty with destiny blend,
And life is a harp, whereon are fingers laid
From past Orion, whose passion hath no end.
And now the Lightning of God its chord hath played!

O Isadora, we have no word for thee
Who hast raised our eyes to the burning eagle on high
Above the sunset and dawn on a mystic sea,
Save only It gleams, that Eagle against the sky!

THE DARK WEAVER

(A PLURALISTIC UNIVERSE)

I

HOW Mystery, at her dark and intricate loom,
Weaves her unnumber'd, her unending
threads:

Her shuttle bears our luminous golds and reds
Of human life; it bears our skeins of gloom.
The weaving of her shuttle is our doom,
Or bright, or dark. But follow where it leads!
Follow, regardless of our personal creeds,
Till haply some vast tapestry shall bloom
In glory on some wide and mighty wall,
O'er subdued splendor of some echoing hall
Where some grave Race shall tread a cloudy home;
And on our visionary ear may fall
Indeed the romance of the Weaver of All,
The mystic One, risen from an outworn loom!

II

The loom, the web, the Weaver! Not as this,
An ultimate, all-considering, clear romance
Woven of a Hand mystic and near, is ours.
Our wills weave ceaselessly, gods of drift and chance.
Sword-blades and gorgons twine our pattern'd
flowers.
A soul's web of the sphinx our life's web is.

In music and dew, how the enigmatical Sower
Lays the dragon's teeth, prayerful in hallow'd hills.
On the wild carton flame they, bitter and dark,
Angels of consequence. The Sower spills
Cold dust on icy headland or war-ways stark,
And the shuttle gleams: lo, bloom of the tenderest flower!

There is no Motive, yet as One it gleams,
And the gloom of all the weavers engendereth,
Like a world-deep vineyard or haunt of tropic vine,
The fruitage of all, the compelling and single Breath
That on old woven battlefields falls like wine
On parchéd lips, lives broken—vintage of dreams!

We weave in hope and passion the hookéd threads,
Which need not be save that an Underbreath
Guides each instinctive finger till it is done.
We have woven our web and doom; nor ever death
Retriev'd one skein or wrought our hope through one.
We are weavers of chance, woven of the Breath that leads.

Oh beautiful is the web, the tapestry
Of beauty of wells and heights and tears and stars;
The web that hides no Answerer; where, untold,
The weavers weave over the changeless bars
Of utterless law, ageless and still and cold,
The empurpl'd tapestry of the Conscript Free!

III

O Child in the sunlight! You cried with lyric soul
When the storming shadow, hawk-swift, mysteriously,
Cast its portent along the vale, a wizardry
Of mountain-terror, with whelming thunder-roll
Beneath cumulous immensities upbuilded; and Earth
was whole.
Thy joy of the elemental seem'd wine to me.
The enduring mountain was crown'd and illum'd
with thee.
In thy blood seem'd the rythm of all truth from pole
to pole.

And there, in thy symbol, thy lightning—the Infinite
Scroll!

The bewildering years, all arrivals of the journeying
world,

All the ineludable, immanent pain, the toll

Whereof God hath no need yet His far lost dawn is
impearl'd

With these irrecoverable sorrows; the resolvent goal

Of all loves, all loss, one Tapestry, complete, unfurl'd

While thy pulse-beat of Pan, of Galahad, O Human
Child,

Held in rythm God's dream and the mountains gloom-
shot and wild!

THE UTOPIAS OF WILLIAM MORRIS

(“HE NEVER SHOWS *HOW*.”—BIOGRAPHER)

YET the dawn is laboring there, and East is East,
East is East, and the sunrise is winged with
wonder.

Beyond the murk and the fell and the toil of the Beast
Is the sunrise, boundless and blinding, plumed with
thunder,

And the Tribe of the Titans gropes and is mean
thereunder.

Then praise for the herald-singers, that they have
ceased

Not ever, praise for the dreams that defy and sunder!

Utopias of the Past! Though they never were

More than may rose-trees bloom in the Alpineglow,
Nor more than may thunder and elemental whirl

Of the star-worlds reside in the tremulous sheen below
On the waters of night, here where the beech-boughs
throw

Their enchantment—yet is all Watling-street astir,

And the fires of Icelandic heaven shine row on row!

Has he told the road, has he traced the defile that clings
Round the ebon crag of the mountain, that plunges yon

Into gulfs of the eyeless morrow, the waste that brings
No hero-wanderer to any Burg-Dale known—

Has he threaded the labyrinth of age-boundless stone?
Nay,—Yet praise to the song-smith who cries the
Mightier Things

And the singer who sings a destiny 'neath the sun!

He has risen, a Creator and Dreamer who dared to dream.

He has wrought in such glamor, by such a forge of old
In the roots of the mountains, as o'er the ancestral stream

Of our father-races poured an ensanguined gold

Of hero-hopes that saga and creed have told.

He has wrought a sword of the ancient Odin-gleam,

And our eyes shall flash fire to it yet ere our Race
be cold!

JUNALUSKA VALLEY

BLUE is the wave under the unrisen moon.

Foam is pour'd on the silent crest, whence
never

The wave is shed through rune on forgotten rune—

The wave of the titan mountains, uprear'd forever.

Blue is the wave's unmeasur'd wall. But gray

The enormous vale, fill'd with the mist of night,

Flooded and fann'd with the moon's eternal ray,

And the world is cold yet aflame with mysterious light.

A MEMORY

(TO L. W. C.)

YOU remember, long ago, on a promontory,
The prow of France, deep in the Atlantic's pil'd
Empurpl'd and foam-laid wave, where the Chan-
nel in glory

Heav'd from the parent ocean, a Centaur-child,
Or trimpl'd into ultimate ocean laden and hoary,
Primal and deathless, moon-led, tenebrous, wild—
How all day long, and through night, and till noon
was mild
We dream'd, and were lost in wonder, in mystery and
story.

For Finistère was behind, and its memories hover'd
Like clouds or cloud-flocks of nameless birds in the sky,
Even as the dream of Celtdom, though undiscover'd
Forever, in the soul of man is a fluted cry
Along haunted downs, memorial and unrecover'd
Yet respir'd from the years unborn, not years that die.
Brittany was behind; but all night, on high,
On the brow of a wingèd Victory, Modernity uncover'd!

For the silent, immense and horizon-piercing power
Of deliberate light from that lonely pinnacle flow'd,
A pulsing foam on the wandering cloud-tower,
A ghostly revealer where the sheeted schooners rode,
An unresting marvel on the ocean's flood-tide hour
When at profound midnight the awful cavalry stood
Unmoving, and all Being was rapt, in air or flood,
Save that blade-against-darkness of the never-wearying
mower!

How could we tell, who do yet remember, the wonder
Of that night, that day, wherein as leaves in the blast
We were borne where rainbows were thriddled, where
ocean's thunder

In the glowing receiving zenith seem'd a wind that
pass'd
Trancendly murmuring! The enormous crags were
under,

And yet odorous frail-intimate flowers round our
knees were cast.

Our souls were echoing fountains of a terrene past.
The heart and the world seem'd welded past might to
sunder.

Dawn came in splendor. But satiety, groping desire
And baffled and drowning wings in too-tenuous air
And dole of the moth confounded through thirst for fire
And bitter weariness of finite souls, made sere,
Unlovely, unheavenly, unanswering, the ruddy gyre
Of illumined cloud, the unwearying world so fair
Thro' whose dawn and darkness life of its life we wear.
In such dole be a token for bewilder'd hearts, where
they tire!

For our life, and our personal lives, since there rose
from gloaming

The visitant, the indwelling Vision of Mystery
With wings of flame in the shadowy spirit, homing
In unaccountable ways, to the unheard cry
Of the Veil'd Desirer—all our estrays, our becoming
Approve that the Mood of Wonder may never die;
That earnest Endurance is its wing in the whelming sky
And long lone deserts of its migratory roaming!

All the defeat was o'ergrown, ere twilight had gilded
The enchanting billows on a lowly shore where we
came.

Day after day, year after year has builded

Unerringly, divinely, a home as of crystal and flame
Whose unfearing walls by weariness are wrought and
shielded,

Where bafflement and mystery are welcome guests
at the dream,

Where creative memories like living passion do gleam
Whose unaging impulsion a far sea-mountain yielded!

THE LAW OF OLD

WHEN the winds of autumn descend on our
valley
And the glimmering presences sound in
the trees,
Lo! the thrilling note of their mystical rally
Is a cry to our soul, grown one with these.

It lifts us afar to the purple ranges
Where the hosts are adrift and the banners glow,
Till even those weary in the bower'd granges
Hear the portal sunder, the bugles blow.

No cycle of earth sees the Powers revel
As then when the ice is on the crag,
When the rains are nigh and the storms dishevel
And reels to the sod the exstatic flag

And the hosts go wasted and singing nightward
And the bugle dies in the echoless deep
And the world's pulse wanes, which anon and lightward
Shall climb from a death that is not sleep.

* * * * *

When the winds of autumn descend on our valley
And the deep Dominions, with iron breath
Blown in the mighty movement, rally
Solemn and sure by the gates of death,

Shall not the joy that from years unnumber'd
Thrills over forest and field and height
At dawn of the Dream of Change which slumber'd
In bough and sky and in splendid night,

The joy that is hers, our own and our mother,
When autumn's death is with gold aflame,
Be ours, and the light of it, now while another
September breathes the ineffable Name?

We are not more than the leaf, or glory
Of clouds that forlorn and transient fold.
We are not less than the world, the hoary
Years, or the sacred Law of Old.

DE PROFUNDIS

A FRAGMENT

. . . . Where our passion
Is wrought into music haunting the helpless mind,

Our life hath its flower ;
Here, where our soul, fed upon hopeless dream,
In a tragic hour,
In dust and night, seeks the primeval stream.

Here is our meaning:
It bides by the deep channels of our soul
Where the fountains, raining
In mystery holy and terrible, dumbly roll,

White and forever
From deeps of bitter ecstasy and sweet tears,
Their flood which never
May know its home through all our possible years.

Our meaning lingers
In brooding portent of sudden destiny
Where they, the bringers
Of burden and anguish and infinity

Breathe by our portal
With brows of the angels and with sockets blind,
With fierce immortal
Music, with love, with thirst of the desert wind,

With flame's own being
To sunder the adamant floor of this our home
Till the spirit, fleeing,
Seeks downward the buried founts of our life and doom.

But the mind that ponders,
It knows not forever that poignant mystery,
Nor the eye that wanders
On landscapes vast and the brooding boundless sky,

Nor down the unmeasured
And awful track of the ageless way of man
Is the meaning treasured;
Yet it clothes him and crowns the goal of the course
he ran.

This is the meaning
That our soul, which is God, in Whom the stars
are sown,
Like a cloud-king leaning
Out o'er the gulf plumb'd by our love alone,

Knows and can utter
Only in silent light on the inner sky
Or in thunder's mutter
When men and nations arise to dare and to die,

Our meaning transcendent
When the foam of the Fountain crowns our brow at
the goal—
That we are defendent
For that which no eye may behold while the planets
roll;

That consecrated
To a labor our mind may serve but may never know,
We are doom'd, we are freighted
With love, with splendor and terror of the fountain's
flow;

That sorrow befalls us

For this, that an Inconceivable may be;

That a Herdsman calls us

With voice on our desolate downs like the ancient sea:

He has laid on the meadows

Of infinite time His print as on summer grass,

And the worlds are shadows

Limn'd upon morning mist as His couriers pass;

His footsteps are o'er us

As on shadowy stairs in the royal East of old

Pass'd the kings before us

And we were Buddha and kings and stairs of gold . . .

And anew the yearning

Is wrought into music haunting the helpless brain,

On the way returning

Downward forever, where the silent fountains rain!

RAINDROPS ON CAMBRIAN SHALE

THE shore its meed of driftwood bears.
 The ancient cliffs their vigil keep.
 On sands more ancient than all years
 Murmurs the homeless wandering deep.
 And here on immemorial stone,
 Where fell the cambrian rains of yore
 Through rainbows in far worlds forgone,
 Your memory keeps its ageless hour.

Far and away the deeps were laid
 Where hung the storm-soul cloud on cloud,
 And all the ocean, thunder-stay'd,
 In calm wide fields no besom plough'd,
 Yearn'd for the revelation's breath.
 And swift and drop by drop they came,
 The leaves from out the thunder-wreath
 Of primal sunfire, shot with flame
 Of sunrise no man's eye hath seen,
 In dawn more ancient than all age.
 Then the storm fell.
 O Rainbow-sheen,
 You carv'd our planet's eldest page!

By the same writer:

THE INDWELLING SPLENDOR

[VERSES]

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